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Encyclopaedia of Islam, Second Edition

'Ulamā'

(10,125 words)

(A.), pl. of *ʿālim*, active participle of *ʿalima*, "to know, to be aware of", denotes scholars of almost all disciplines (*luḡha*, *bayān*, *ḥisāb*, etc. [q.vv.]). However, the term refers more specifically to the scholars of the religious sciences (*faḳīh*, *mufasssīr*, *muftī*, *muḥaddith*, *mutakallim*, *ḳārī* etc. [q.vv.]), considered here exclusively in the context of Sunnism, where they are regarded as the guardians, transmitters and interpreters of religious knowledge, of Islamic doctrine and law; the term also embraces those who fulfil religious functions in the community that require a certain level of expertise in religious and judicial issues, such as judges and preachers (*ḳāḍī*, *ḳhaṭīb* [q.vv.]), the imāms of mosques, etc. The *ʿālim* is often seen as opposed to the *adīb*, just as religious knowledge (*ʿilm* [q.v.]) is clearly distinguished from the practice of "profane literature" (*adab* [q.v.]).

1. In the Arab world.

(a) "Knowledge" and the scholars.

While the verb *ʿalima* is well attested in pre-Islamic poetry, *ʿālim* is not employed there as a participial substantive denoting a category of people who possess a particular knowledge, unlike *arrāfḥāzī*, *kāhin*, *ḳhaṭīb* and *shāʿir* [q.vv.]. The frequency with which the root *ʿ-l-m* occurs in the Ḳurʿān and the equivalence encountered there between practical knowledge and religious knowledge, or indeed between knowledge and faith (LVIII, 11; II, 26; VI, 97-9), could not but be significant for the development of religious thought in Islam (Rosenthal, *Knowledge*, 12-32).

In fact, a general tendency was to be observed among practitioners of the religious sciences to consider as certain knowledge only that inherited from ﷺ the Prophet, albeit with nuances conditioned by their theological orientation. Thus the Baghdādī Mālikī Ibn K̲huwayzmandād (d. 390/999) went so far as to demand the burning of books of *kalām*, of poetry and of grammar, as being unreliable disciplines, inferior to the traditions transmitted from the Prophet (Ibn Ḥadjar al-Haytamī, *al-Fatāwā al-ḥadīthiyya*, Cairo 1970, 207). For Ibn Taymiyya [q.v.], the science *par excellence* is that which derives from the Prophet; all the rest is either useless, or does not deserve to be called science. The jurist of Muʿtazilī tendency al-Māwardī [q.v.] comments that numerous prophetic traditions on "the study of science" concern only religious knowledge (*Adab*, 36-49). For Ibn Rushd, on the other hand, certain verses of the Qurʾān are an inducement to the study of philosophy (*Faṣl al-maḳāl*, *init.*)

(b) *Identity-consciousness and hierarchisation.*

The 'ulamā' have long been seen as a very distinct group, a regulated and structured body, expressing the popular voice, constituting the "solid framework of permanent government behind these changing dynasties" (Macdonald). In fact, during the first two centuries of Islam, they consisted of a relatively small number of people, engaged in the elaboration of *fiqh* and concentrated at Medina, in the south of ʿIrāq and in the caliphal capitals, and general lines of informal consensus were more easily established than was subsequently to be the case. This consensus (*idjmāʿ* [q.v.]) gave them weight, but did not transform them into an institution comparable to a legislative body (Mottahedeh, 138-9). However, they had a consciousness of their identity which marked them as a distinct group (Berkey, 13-14).

Furthermore, traditions were attributed to the Prophet which emphasised the precedence and pre-eminence of knowledge and of the 'ulamā', most of them probably dating from a period in which the influence and the prestige of the latter was not yet well established (Marlow, 25). To a man from Medina, visiting him in Damascus with the object of collecting traditions, Abu 'l-Dardā' conveyed the following tradition, attributed to Muḥammad: "Scholars are the heirs of the prophets who have endowed them with knowledge as a legacy. He who has chosen knowledge has taken a generous share, and he who has taken a path towards the acquisition of knowledge, for him God will smooth a path to Paradise" (*Concordance*, iv, 321a; cf. Ibn Ḥanbal, *Musnad*, v, 196/xvi, ed. Shākir and al-Zayn, Cairo 1995, 71, nos. 21612-3; al-Bayhaqī, *Shuʿab al-īmān*, ed. M.S.B. Zaghlūl, Beirut 1990, ii, 262-4, nos. 1696-8; Ibn ʿAbd al-Barr, *Djāmiʿ*, i, 37). This tradition, absent from Mālik's *al-Muwattaʿa*, was apparently unknown at Medina. Also attributed to the Prophet are statements that scholars are superior to "martyrs" (Ibn ʿAbd al-Barr, i, 30-2), that the best members of his community are the scholars and that among the latter the best are the *fukahā* (al-Māwardī, *Adab*, 39), that knowledge is superior to cultic practices (Ibn ʿAbd al-Barr, i, 21-7; *Concordance*, iv, 320a). In the second half of the 3rd/10th

century, the conviction was established that prophets are only superior to accredited scholars (*al-fakīh al-‘ālim*) in terms of their prophetic mission (Gilliot, *Le Commentaire coranique de Hūd b. Muḥakkam* , in *Arabica* , xliv [1997], 204-5).

It is true that the ‘ulamā’ were progressively constituted as such by the study and practice of *fiqh* [q.v.], but their essential characteristic was definitely the knowledge of *ḥadīth* [q.v.], this being the "science" *par excellence* in this religious context, all the more so in that its mode of transmission was reckoned to associate them with the first Muslim generations and with ﷺ the Prophet (al-Rāmāhurmuzī, 161-2; Mottahedeh, 141). This link created by the transmission of *ḥadīth* contributed more than any other factor to the awareness which scholars of the religious sciences had of the dignity of their mission, as is demonstrated, in particular, by the favour enjoyed by those traditionists who had "high" chains of authority (*‘uluww al-ḥadīth*) (al-Nawawī, *Taḥrīb* , ch. 29; Marçais, 193-9; Mottahedeh, 141-2). This insistence on *ḥadīth* is not surprising; indeed, all scholars studied the Qur’ān and the *sunna* , but not all were specialists in law, and those engaged in theology were fewer still (Mez, 162-3).

The practice of "wandering in search of knowledge" facilitated contacts between students and masters of the diverse regions of the Muslim world, and gave an "international" cachet to the community of scholars (Gilbert, *passim*) which contributed not a little to a consciousness of identity among the scholars and to the standardisation of knowledge and of its transmission. Numerous major scholars were also engaged in the composition of poetry (see, however, R. Drory, *The Abbassid construction of the Jahiliyya* , in *SI*, lxxxiii [1996], 33-49, on the rivalry between poets, transmitters of poetry and scholars), or produced works of *adab* . In addition, universal and local histories and their continuations (*ta’rikh* , *ṣila* [q.v.]), the books on classes or generations of scholars (*ṭabaḳāt* [q.v.]), were most often written by ‘ulamā’, especially traditionists, which endowed the latter with major influence in the codification of knowledge and of ethics (Gilbert, 110-11). Those who were engaged in a more specialised fashion in the study of *ḥadīth* shared a kind of communal identity which often gave rise to a kind of "leadership", a "primacy" (*ri’āsa* ; *ra’īs al-muḥaddithīn* , *riyāsat al-‘ulamā’* ; Chamberlain, 154-6), which depended to a great extent on the number and quality of licences of transmission (*idjāza* [q.v.]) obtained from accredited masters. This primacy also existed in more specialised disciplines, such as law and theology. It is thus that Abu ‘l-‘Abbās Ibn Suraydj [q.v.]), one of the "renovators" (*mudjaddid* [q.v.]) of the early 3rd/9th century, is considered the one "to whom fell the primacy of the Shāfi‘īs (in Baghdad)" (*intahat ilayhi riyāsat aṣḥāb al-Shāfi‘ī* ; Ibn al-Djawzī, *Muntaẓam* , year 306/918-19). This same primacy in law was devolved to Abū Bakr al-Abharī (d. 375/986; *op. cit.*, *sub anno*), for the Mālikīs of Baghdād, among whom he held precedence (*al-muḥaddam fihi*); to Abū Bakr al-Kh̲w̲ārazmī (d. 403/1012; *op. cit.*, *sub anno*), among the Ḥanafīs. As for the *kāḍī* al-Ḥusayn al-Ḥalīmī (d. 403/1012), he found himself endowed with a double primacy in Transoxania, that of the traditionists and that of the dialectical theologians (*ra’īs al-muḥaddithīn wa ‘l-mutakallimīn* ; al-Dhahabī, *Siyar* , xvii, 231).

On the basis of the example of the Ḥanafī Abū Bakr al-Rāzī (d. 370/981; *Muntaẓam, sub anno*), such a "prime figure" is sometimes called "the best of his age" (*imām 'aṣrihi*), or the *shaykh* of his region or of his city. Primacy in the domain of the religious sciences was sometimes combined with primacy in "piety" (*taḳwā*), in the exercise of ritual practices (*'ibāda*), or in asceticism (*zuhd*), or in Ṣūfism (Mottahedeh, 145-50).

(c) *Genesis and evolution.*

Muslim tradition was anxious to establish uninterrupted continuity between the knowledge of the Prophet and that of later generations, by way of the Companions and the Followers. In this scheme of things, numbers are employed in an apparently meticulous fashion: knowledge of the Companions, that of the principles of transmission, that of narratives, that of exegesis, were seen as the inheritance, respectively, of six Companions, Followers, or Followers of Followers (according to al-ʿAbbās al-Durī, d. 271/884; al-Dalad̲jī, 47-8, *Falaka* , quoting al-Ḥākim al-Nīsābūrī, 43-4). Similarly, reference is made to the six or the twelve *fukahā'* of Medina (al-Ḥākim al-Nīsābūrī, 43-4). Or furthermore, according to ʿAlī b. al-Madīnī (d. 234/849): "The knowledge of the Companions of the Prophet concerning the prescriptions of the law fell to three [Companions], by whom it was acquired": Ibn Masʿūd, Zayd b. Thābit and Ibn ʿAbbās; then it passed to the generation of Mālik b. Anas, by way of al-Shaʿbī (d. 94/713), Ibrāhīm al-Nakhaʿī (d. 96/715), al-Zuhri (d. 124/742), al-Aʿmash (d. 148/765), Sufyān al-Thawrī (d. 161/778) [q.vv.], etc. (Ibn al-D̲jawzi, *Talkīh* , 458-9).

In the early years of Islam, even though *ʿālim* can have the adjectival sense of "erudite" in general, or in religious subjects in particular (*ʿālim bi*), it is most often associated with the knowledge and the transmission of traditions and of *ḥadīth* ; furthermore, it is not often that the qualities of *ʿālim* and *faqīh* [q.v.] are attributed to the same individual, the latter expressing in particular "personal" ideas of the way religion should be practised, the former referring rather to precedents, conclusions reached by others in the past (Juynboll, 74, and ch. 2 on the *ḳāḍī* s). It is stressed, however, that such-and-such a person was not only *ʿālim* and *faqīh*, but also *ḳārī'* and *mufasssīr* , thus Ibn D̲juraydjī (d. 150/767 [q.v.]; Motzki, 246).

The ʿAbbāsids, with the exception of al-Maʿmūn [q.v.] (see MIḤNA ; Crone and Hinds, *God's caliph*, 58-96, on the transition from the caliphal *sunna* to the Prophetic *sunna*, under the Umayyads and the ʿAbbāsids) preferred to have the ʿulamā' and the army on their side, rather than the bureaucracy (Marlow, 104; for the *ʿālim/kātib* [q.v.] antagonism, Mottahedeh, 143; Petry, 205, 209). They had begun with all the necessary apparatus: troops, secretaries, theologians and religious prestige, and Ibn al-Muḳaffaʿ, in his *Risāla fi 'l-ṣaḥāba* , composed at the outset of the caliphate of al-Manṣūr, proposed, among other things, a trial of strength with the ʿulamā', urging the caliph to use his authority to impose legal and religious uniformity

(Goitein, *Turning point*, 161-4; Crone, *Slaves*, 69-70; van Ess, *TG*, ii, 24-5; Marlow, 99-104). Ultimately the 'ulamā' were not suppressed, and it was indeed the *zindīk* s [q.v.] (Manicheans and their associates) who were victims of the inquisition of al-Mahdī.

During the first five centuries of Islam, the 'ulamā' developed their own practices and organisations independently of the state (Gilbert, 113). It is a fact that the Umayyads (an exemplary case being that of al-Zuhri [q.v.]; M. Lecker, *Biographical notes on Ibn Shihāb al-Zuhri*, in *JSS*, xli [1996], 21-61), and then the 'Abbāsids, had recourse to scholars, counsellors and ambassadors, and employed the 'ulamā' as judges, but they did not found lasting institutions with personnel dedicated to the study of religion and of law (Gilbert, 113-14). It also happened that benefactors acted as the patrons of scholars or of educational projects and institutions, but it was primarily through the efforts of independent 'ulamā' and a minority among them who enjoyed the support of individuals or of the state that codified practices and an "international" structure took shape among scholars during the first centuries of Islam (Gilbert, 114).

The political traumas of the 4th/10th and 5th/11th centuries contributed not a little to the consolidation of the power of the 'ulamā', who, together with other urban élites, played an important role in the life of Muslim cities. Towards the mid-5th/11th century, ¶ whereas hitherto they had been essentially a religious élite, they now also became a social and political élite. In many cities, families of 'ulamā' united with families of landowners, bureaucrats and merchants, guaranteeing the stable guidance of these cities for several generations (Lapidus, 22-9).

On the one hand, with the disintegration of the 'Abbāsid state, a kind of divorce took place between religion and power. The state was no longer capable of enforcing its claims in matters of religious authority. While in the 'Abbāsid metropolises the 'ulamā' had needed to deploy considerable energy to maintain their position in relation to institutions of political power, in the cities of the Būyid dominions they were more free to assert themselves (Crone, *Slaves*, 85).

Yet on the other hand, the former order of scholarly activity evolved with the institutionalisation of the international network of contacts between scholars and with their professionalisation. This phenomenon first developed as a result of the foundation of colleges and pious foundations (*madrasa*, *wakf* [q.vv.]; Makdisi, *Humanism*, 24-38), although this did not in essence affect the system of instruction (*tarbiya* [q.v.]; Makdisi, *Humanism*, 97-117; Gilliot, *Théologie et littérature*) in Islam, which remained much as it had been before, i.e. largely informal and based on the relationship between masters and disciples (Berkey, 18, 85-94; Gilliot, *Transmission*).

However, while in the first centuries scholars had been obliged to earn their living through the exercise of secular occupations (Cohen, 35-45), or by reliance on individual patronage, the new institutions of education and transmission of knowledge and the places offering

accommodation to students or teachers (*madrasa* , *dār al-ḥadīth* , *khānaqāh* , *ribāṭ* , *zāwiya* [q.v.] assisted the latter financially and materially (Gilbert, 118-9; Makdisi, *Humanism*, 232-8; Chamberlain, 61-66). This did not prevent some scholars from continuing to pursue professions in crafts or in commerce (Petry, 241-4).

The professionalisation of the 'ulamā' proceeded apace, for example, in Cairo in the second half of the 8th/13th century. Between this period and the beginning of the 11th/16th century, appointments to posts in education were often controlled by the Mamlūks or by the intellectual élite itself (Berkey, ch. iv). Among the 'ulamā' of Cairo during this period, there was seen the emergence of a kind of "intermediate" class (Lapidus); while there was no real separation between the various circles, this elite was not particularly interested in the problems of the masses, nor in the pursuit of power, although there were occasions when it intervened on behalf of the populace, and the latter felt a special empathy for those among the scholars in whom commonly-held values were believed to be discernible.

Despite the evidence of social mobility, this scholarly élite also experienced certain forms of self-reproduction, if not in-breeding, and this led to the emergence of veritable dynasties of scholars (Bulliet, 55-60; Mottahedeh, 135, *passim* ; Berkey, 126-7; A.K.S. Lambton, in *SI*, v [1956], 134, for quasi-hereditary posts of *qādī*): the Ibn 'Asākir, al-Buluḳīnī, Ibn Djamā'a, Ibn Qudāma, Ibn Ṣaṣrā [q.v.]; for the latter, see Petry, 232-40), the Bakrīs in Egypt in the 10th/16th century (M.T. al-Bakrī, *Bayt al-Ṣiddīk* , Cairo 1905; Winter, 222-3), the al-'Adjamīs in Aleppo (Eddé), the 'Āṣim al-Thaḳafīs in al-Andalus (Fierro), the Ibn Abī 'Īsās in Cordova (Marin, 291, n. 1-2, with other references).

Personal relations between scholars also played a role in appointments, as is evident from the favours enjoyed by Walī al-Dīn Ibn al-'Irāḳī (d. 826/1423) ¶ on the part of the friends of his father Zayn al-Dīn (Berkey, 120-1). Some were anxious to guarantee lucrative posts for their children (Makdisi, *Colleges* , 170-1).

Evolution towards professionalism reached its culminating point under the Ottomans, who established a hierarchy of *muftī* s, presided over by the senior *muftī* of Istanbul, the *shaykh al-islām* [q.v.] (see further on the Ottoman religious institution, section 3. below, and 'ILMIYYE). As regards the intellectual situation of the 'ulamā' towards the end of the so-called "classical" period, from the 7th/13th and especially from the 8th/14th century onward, the preliminary symptoms of stagnation or of sclerosis become evident. Thus Ibn Khaldūn (d. 808/1406), in his survey of the religious sciences (*Muḳaddima* , ch. vi, ii, 364-iii, 80, tr. Rosenthal, ii, 411-iii, 103), in numerous instances deplores the decadence of theology in his time. But long before this, the incompetence of scholars who preferred appearance to knowledge had been a widespread theme, sometimes inspired, admittedly, by pride or envy (Berkey, 183-8). It could be said that sclerosis set in during the 9th/15th century, if by this it is meant that few original works were

produced, and that the decline in creativity, already perceptible during the two preceding centuries, became an established fact. It is appropriate, however, to show caution in this regard, since some talented polygraphers, of whom the best example is al-Suyūṭī (d. 911/1505 [q.v.]), made worthwhile contributions to the religious sciences at this time (Gilliot, *Evolution*).

For the 'ulamā' of al-Andalus, see Mones and Urvoy. For the rivalries of scholars of the different *madhhab* s or persuasions, see Laoust, *Pluralismes* , 1-133; Makdisi, *Ibn 'Aqīl* , 293-383; Chamberlain, 92-107; Pouzet, *Damas* , 108-12. For various positions in regard to Ṣūfism, see TAŞAWWUF .

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(Cl. Gilliot)

2. In Persia [see MUDJTAHID, and ĀYATULLĀH, in Suppl.].

3. In Ottoman Turkey.

While the early Ottoman ‘ulamā’, in particular, broadly shared the formation, functions and outlook of their counterparts in other Islamic societies, by far their most distinctive feature came to be the formalization of their role in the state through the development under successive sultans, beginning with Meḥemmed II (1451-81 [q.v.]), of an (eventually) thoroughgoing and highly elaborated *cursus honorum* of learned offices—the so-called ‘*ilmiyye*’ [q.v.]—on a scale quite unprecedented in Islam. (It should be observed that so striking is this feature of the Ottoman scene that the existence of ‘ulamā’ who chose to stand outside the learned hierarchy, or at the least refused to be fully drawn into it, tends to go unremarked.) If this arguably purposeful, certainly large-scale incorporation of the ‘ulamā’ by the state into its service led to sometimes fruitful collaboration with the secular authorities (as in the case, for example, of Kemāl Pasha-zāde and Abu ‘l-Su‘ūd Efendi [q.vv.] in the reign of Süleymān I (1520-66 [q.v.]), the creation and elaboration of the ‘*ilmiyye*’ may be said also to have had the ultimately subversive effect of closely defining a class and providing it with a clearly defined set of material goals. As a result, by the 18th century a virtually closed aristocracy of the ‘ulamā’ had come into being which had little to do with the traditional roles of the ‘ulamā’ as transmitters of Islamic learning, as exemplars of piety, or as mediators between the rulers and the ruled. Deprived of many of their sources of power and wealth by the reforms of Maḥmūd II

(1808-39 [q.v.]) and of the Tanẓīmāt (1839-76 [q.v.]), the ‘ulamā’ lived in uneasy coexistence with new structures in the fields of, for example, education and the administration of justice throughout the remainder of the 19th and the early 20th centuries until their corporate existence was brought to an end in the early years of the Republic, with the reforms following the abolition of the Caliphate in March 1924.



Bibliography

Both the structure and (briefly) the history of the Ottoman learned institution are discussed in the article ‘ILMIYYE. In addition to it, and the sources there cited, reference should be made, *inter alia*, to the articles FATWĀ. ii. Ottoman Empire

ḲĀDĪ

ḲĀDĪ ‘ASKAR

and SHAYKH AL-ISLĀM. For further information on the ‘ulamā’ and the ‘ilmiyye to the end of the 16th century, see H. İnalcık, *The Ottoman Empire, the classical age 1300-1600*, London 1973, 165-202

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and for references to the role of the ‘ulamā’ in the post-Tanẓīmāt period, see E.J. Zürcher, *Turkey, a modern history*, London 1993, index s.vv.

(R.C. Repp)

4. In Muslim India.

Here the ‘ulamā’ occupied a prestigious position and were actively involved in promoting the religious sciences, so much so that Rashīd Riḍā’ [q.v.] remarked that when the science of ḥadīth was on the decline in the Islamic lands, the Indian ‘ulamā’ resuscitated it (*Miftāḥ kunūz al-sunna* , Beirut 1985, 12). The author of the *Tādj al-ma’āthir* called them "a gem in the ring of *sharī‘at* ", while Fakhr-i Mudabbir assigned them a place below the prophets but above the rulers, and quoted the following three sayings of the Prophet to highlight their position: (i)

"The 'ulamā' are the heirs of the Prophets", (ii) "If there were no 'ulamā' the people would have loitered about in the world like wild animals", (iii) "The best rulers are those who go to the door of the 'ulamā' and the worst 'ulamā' are those who go to the door of the rulers" (*Tārīkh-i Fakhr al-Dīn Mubārak Shāh* , London 1927, 9-12).

In popular parlance, the phrase 'ulamā'-o-mashāyikh was used for two distinct types of men of religion, one looking after the external and the other after the spiritual aspect of religion. The 'ulamā' were categorized as 'ulamā'-i ākhirat and 'ulamā'-i dunyā (Baranī, *Tārīkh* , 154-5). The former led an abstemious life of pious devotion to religious learning and kept away from courts; the 'ulamā'-i dunyā involved themselves in material pursuits and consorted with kings. Niẓām al-Dīn Awliyā' [q.v.] once remarked about them: "Knowledge is in itself a noble thing, but when it is used for earning money and the scholars go about from door to door, respect for it vanishes" (*Fawā'id al-fu'ād* , 182). Aḥmad Sirhindī [q.v.] called such scholars 'ulamā'-i sū' and held them responsible for the misery of the community and the religious confusion that prevailed in his day (*Maktūbāt* , Lucknow 1877, i, 46-7, 70). Anxious to win royal favours, such 'ulamā' gave *fatwā* s to justify their actions. The 'ulamā' of the Slave King Kaykubād's court gave a *fatwā* which rendered as obligatory prayers and fasts for the sultan (Baranī, *Tārīkh*, 154). Miyān Muṣṭafā, a Maḥdawī 'ālim of the 16th century, treated such 'ulamā' as *rahzan* (bandits) (*Djawāhir al-taṣḍīq* , Ḥaydarābād 1367/1948, 25, 53, 61). However, the 'ulamā' who spent their lives in imparting religious knowledge and kept away from the courts were held in high esteem. They dedicated themselves to producing religious works and led lives of penitence and poverty.

As specialists in the Islamic sciences. The 'ulamā' of the higher category specialised in some branch of Qur'ān, ḥadīth, fiqh or kalām —and gained fame as *mufasssīr* , *muḥaddith* or *muftī* . 'Alā' al-Dīn Maḥā'imī (author of the *Tabṣīr al-Raḥmān wa-taysīr al-Mannān*), Shihāb al-Dīn Dawlatābādī (author of the *Baḥr-i mawwādj*), Shāh Walī Allāh Dihlawī [q.v.] (author of *Fatḥ al-khabīr bi-mā lā budda min ḥifẓihi fī 'ilm al-tafsīr* and translator of the Qur'ān into Persian), Thanā' Allāh Pānīpatī (author of the *Tafsīr-i Maẓharī*) and others were known for their exegetical studies.

Among the *muḥaddithūn* the names of Raḍī al-Dīn Ṣaghānī (author of the *Mashāriḥ al-anwār*), 'Abd al-Ḥaqq Dihlawī (author of *Lama'āt al-tanqīh 'alā Mishkāt al-maṣābiḥ*), 'Alī Muttakī (author of the *Kanz al-'ummāl*), Ṭāhir Pattanī (author of the *Madjma' biḥār al-anwār fī gharā'ib al-tanzīl wa-laṭā'if al-akḥbār*), Shāh Walī Allāh (author of *al-Musawwā* , *al-Muḥallā* and the *Sharḥ Tarādjim abwāb al-Bukḥārī*) were famous for their contribution to ḥadīth studies.

In the sphere of law, the contemporary 'ulamā' of Firūz Shāh Tughluq and, three centuries later, Awrangzīb, made notable contributions. The *Fatāwā-yi Tatār-Khāniyya* of 'Alim b. 'Alā' (ed. Kāḍī Sadjdjād Ḥusayn, 5 vols. Ḥaydarābād 1984-9) and the *Fatāwā-yi Ālamgīriyya* (Kānpūr 1350/1931-2) by a group of distinguished 'ulamā' under the direct supervision of Awrangzīb, are

works of great importance. Though works on *fiqh* had appeared during the time of Balban (e.g. the *Fatāwā al-Ghiyāthiyya*) and the *Khaldjī* sultans (the *Fatāwā Kara-Khāniyya*), it was during the time of Firūz Shāh Tughluq that legal studies developed. Of the various problems investigated by the 'ulamā', the question of the ownership of land in India examined by Shaykh Djalāl al-Dīn Thānesarī (*Tahakkuk-i arāḍi-yi Hind* , ed. Sa'īd Ashraf Ḥasanī, Karachi) deserves special mention.

In the sphere of *kalām* , Shāh Walī Allāh's *Hudjdjat Allāh al-bāligha* reflects the author's understanding of the problems of the 18th century. (For his distinctly original sociological concepts, see Nizami, *The historical role of three Auliya of South Asia* , Karachi 1987, 35-60, and also idem, *Shah Wali Allah of Delhi . His thought and contribution*, in IC [1980], 141-52.)

The teaching institutions of some 'ulamā' became famous for the study of some specific branch of religious learning, like the *madrasa-yi Raḥīmiyya* of Shāh Walī Allāh for *ḥadīth* studies and the *Farangī Maḥal* [q.v. in Suppl.] one for *fiqh* studies. Some scholars devoted themselves to specific classics of their field of study; thus Shaykh 'Abd al-Ḥaqq concentrated on the *Mishkāṭ* , and Shāh Walī Allāh on the *Muwatta'* , and scholars from different regions turned to them for instruction in these works.

Considered in the broad perspective of their studies, the 'ulamā' of the first phase in Muslim India were in general involved mostly in preparing commentaries and summaries of classical works; in the next phase they were concerned with legal studies and combatting sectarianism; in the third phase they concentrated on *ḥadīth* studies; while in the 18th century scholastic theology (*ilm-i kalām*) was their main concern. Each trend was inspired by the specific needs of Muslim society at the particular times.

As modest-living and ascetic teachers. There were 'ulamā', like Mawlānā 'Alā' al-Dīn Uṣūlī and Mawlānā Kamāl al-Dīn Zāhid, both teachers of Niẓām al-Dīn Awliyā', who rejected court life and turned to giving instruction in their own mud houses. Uṣūlī carried on teaching even when starving (*Fawā'id al-fu'ād* , 165-6; *Khayr al-madḡālīs* , 180, 190-1). Balban summoned Mawlānā Zāhid and requested him to serve as his personal *imām* . "Our prayer is all that is left to us, does the sultan want to take that also from us?", replied the Mawlānā (*Siyyar al-awliyā'* , 106). 'Ulamā' of this ¶ category tended to be more respected by the people.

At rulers' courts. Many Muslim rulers kept round themselves 'ulamā' as a sign of their dignity and prestige. Iltutmish spent one crore (? of *tankas*) on them (Djūzjdjānī, *Ṭabaḡāt-i Nāṣirī* , 165). Balban, Sikandar Lōdī and many other sultans in Dihlī and the provinces visited the houses of the 'ulamā' and heard their sermons. Sayyid Nūr al-Dīn Mubārak Ghaznawī criticized at the court of Iltutmish some customs and practices of the sultans. Muḥammad b. Tughluq kept a team of 'ulamā' by his side and obtained their concurrence before executing anybody. According to 'Iṣāmī, other 'ulamā' had issued a *fatwā* legalising rebellion against this ruler.

There were some posts in the administration like those of *Şadr-i Djahān* , *Şhaykh al-Islām* , *muhtasib* , *kaḍī* , *khaṭīb* , and teachers in government *madrasa* s, which were the exclusive province of the 'ulamā'.

International contacts. It appears that 'ulamā' of Indian origin gained wider recognition in Muslim lands elsewhere quite early. In the 6th/12th century, al-Sam'anī gave (*Ansāb* , facs. ed., 237, 313, 497, 543) several *nisba* s, of scholars such as Daybulī, Sindhī, Lāhūrī and Maṣṣūrī. After the Mongol invasion, many 'ulamā' migrated from Central Asia and Persia to India. Referring to scholars in Lahore, Ḥasan Niẓāmī says that "out of every hundred persons ninety were 'ālim and out of every ten, nine were *mufasssīr* of the Qur'an" (*Tādj al-ma'āthir* , ms.; see also 'Iṣāmī, *Futūḥ al-salāṭīn* , ed. Madras, 114-15). During the time of 'Alā' al-Dīn Kḥaldjī, some scholars of Dihlī had, according to Baranī, attained a stature equal to that of Abū Yūsuf, Muḥammad al-Shaybānī, al-Ghazālī and Fakhr al-Dīn Rāzī, and scholars from different parts of the Islamic world came to study at their feet. Conversely, the Indian 'ulamā' kept in contact with Islamic centres of learning elsewhere, and Shaykh 'Alī Muttakī, Shaykh 'Abd al-Ḥaḥḥ Muḥaddith, Shāh Walī Allāh and others visited the Ḥidjāz.

Political involvement. From the time of Shāh Walī Allāh, who wrote political letters to Aḥmad Shāh Durrānī [q.v.] and Indian potentates to strive for the resurrection of Muslim political authority in India, the 'ulamā' became deeply involved in political struggles. Shāh 'Abd al-'Azīz declared against the British government of India; Sayyid Aḥmad Brēlwī [q.v.] approached the Rādja of Gwāliyār [q.v.] to join hands in the struggle against foreign domination. In the Sepoy Mutiny of 1857-8 many 'ulamā' were active, and subsequently, in the conspiracy trials of Ambala, Patna and other places, many 'ulamā' were convicted, and some of them exiled to the Andaman Islands or Malta (see IC [1990], 29-63).

As organisers of religious debates (*munāẓarāt*). During the Sultanate and the Mughal periods some 'ulamā' had involved themselves in Islamic sectarian controversies, but during the 19th century they were drawn into *munāẓara* s with the Hindus and the Christian missionaries. 'Ulamā' like Raḥmat Allāh Kayrānwī, Thanā' Allāh Pānīpatī, Ḥāfiz 'Alī Farrukhābādī and others were involved in these, and a profuse literature arose on such controversies.

Responses to Western science and education. Since these had come with British rule, the 'ulamā' for long hesitated to accept them. However, Shāh 'Abd al-'Azīz Dihlawī, who had declared India to be *dār al-ḥarb* , did not hesitate to praise British achievements in science and technology. The *fatāwā* of 'Abd al-Ḥayy Farangī Maḥallī show the reaction of 'ulamā' to new circumstances of resulting from the spread of Western ways of life (see Nizami, *Socio-religious movements in Indian Islam 1763-1898*, in IC [1970], 131-46).

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(K.A. Nizami)

5. In South-East Asia.

As in other parts of the Muslim world, this general term encompasses a variety of specific functions, including judge, scholar and publisher and teacher and instructor at all intellectual and social levels. As possessors of knowledge in the widest sense the ‘ulamā’ might be government functionaries or they might be active outside government. It is not uncommon in South-East Asia for the individual *‘ālim* to act in both spheres throughout his life. The ‘ulamā’ always represented a possible alternative locus of authority to the organs of state. While there is no general history of ‘ulamā’ in South-East Asia, the following topics seem to be crucial in any account of their function.

(a) *The pre-modern and colonial Muslim world.*

First, in the field of literature we have extensive text traditions in all genres [see INDONESIA; MALAYSIA; PATANI]. From the late 18th and particularly in the 19th century, the materials are especially strong in *fiḳh* and local *fatāwā*. Much yet remains to be studied in these areas. Second, in the field of education (and by extension publication) the ‘ulamā’ established extensive networks of schools and publication houses right through Muslim South-East Asia. They maintained strong internal links and also had links to ٱ Mecca, Medina and, later to al-Azhar. The profession was commonly exercised as a family affair. Third, and especially important as to the ‘ulamā’ being an alternative locus of authority, is their political function. In

the pre-European period, the 'ulamā' were instrumental in providing an alternative (West Asian-Muslim) model for kingship and rule. In addition, they insisted on the primacy of Islam as the only proper source of authority in the Malay and Javanese kingdoms. These demands did not always sit easily with the political realities of the time. In the colonial period, the 'ulamā' were a focus for resistance to European rule [see PADRI for an example; generally, see INDONESIA].

(b) *The post-colonial and modern Muslim world.*

The position and status of Islam has been immeasurably improved with the demise of colonialism. For the first time since the pre-modern Sultanates, Islamic political parties and activities are no longer proscribed and have a real chance of exercising political power. However, the 'ulamā', because they interpret Islam and express it in political terms, are all the more an alternative source of authority. Malaysia and Indonesia are secular states, and the tension between this fact and the Islamic imperative has been and will remain a consistent feature of modern politics. The state has reacted in two ways. First, by attempting to co-opt the 'ulamā' into state service, as in appointments to teaching institutions, and to government advisory bodies such as "Councils of Ulama", or "Councils of Religion" which have specific advice and regulatory functions. In addition, Departments/Offices of Religion have been established in Malaysia, Singapore, Brunei, Indonesia and the Philippines, which all provide considerable career opportunities for 'ulamā'. Second, the states have permitted overt political activity by Islamic groups. The Islamic political parties (PMIP, and later PAS in Malaysia and the NU, Masjumi and later PPP in Indonesia) have never held outright power. Instead, they fulfill the historical role of 'ulamā' in offering the Islamic political, intellectual and moral alternative, often now in Western-derived forms, in which many of them have recently been educated.

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6. Amongst the Han Chinese, Chinese-speaking Muslims.

Generally speaking, learned Chinese Muslims, though many of them were Confucian literati, are usually called *‘ālim* (or A-lin in Chinese) distinguished from the Islamic clergy title *imām* or *ahung*. Because of their long assimilation into the host Han culture in a non-Islamic environment, Muslims in China have never fully developed their institutions such as *madrasas*, *kāfī*s and *muftī*s, as in other Islamic lands, and Islam has been confined to personal religious practice. As a result of assimilation, Chinese Muslims usually acquired a Confucian education and adopted its ethics in order to survive in the majority Han society. Chinese Muslims were probably not aware of the formation of a body of *‘ulamā* existing outside China, as the term did not appear in Chinese Islamic works until the beginning of the 20th century. After several centuries of assimilation, most Han-speaking Muslims were becoming ignorant of their religion. Hence some Muslim intellectuals became worried about the decline of Islam, and launched the so-called "Renaissance Movement" or "Islamic revival". Amongst the Muslim literati, Wang Tai-yü (d. 1657 or 1658), Ma Chu (1640-1710?), Liu Chih (1662-1736) and Ma Fu-ch’u (1794?-1874) are regarded as the leading figures in the history of Chinese Islam, being extolled as "The Four Grand *‘Ulamā*". They began translating Islamic works from Persian into Chinese, and tried to encourage writing on Islamic subjects in Chinese.

Wang Tai-yü was apparently the pioneer here. Wang indicated in his books that his writings were aimed at bringing true religion to his fellow Muslims and at clarifying Islam to the Chinese Confucianists who were usually biased against other faiths. His most important works are: (1) *Chêng-chiao Chên-chuen* ("The true interpretation of Islam"), an interpretation of the *Sharī’a* and basic doctrines of Islam, and defence of Islam against the Confucianists, Taoists and Buddhists’ attacks; and (2) *Ch’ing-chên Ta-shue* ("The advanced knowledge of Islam"), focussing on the doctrine of *tawḥīd* and Islamic cosmology.

According to his biography, Ma Chu was especially active in the movement, seeking to revive Islam through politics. He wrote a few books mainly on Confucian politics, but only one on Islam: *Ch’ing-chên Chih-nan* ("The compass-guide to Islam"). In this, Ma Chu tried to prove that Islam is superior to other Chinese religions by comparing Islamic doctrines and ethics in these faiths. He spent four years travelling around China proper preaching Islam to Muslims and to Han literati, so that his book became widely circulated and praised. He even tried to seek an audience with the Emperor so that he could make Islam known to him, and secure the raising of Islam to the status of Confucianism, but failed.

Liu Chih has been reckoned by modern scholars as the inaugurator of the Islamic sciences in China. He has even been revered as the spiritual founder of the Chinese native *Ṣūfī* order, Hsi-tao-tang. It is said that he wrote more than 500 *chüan* (volumes) on Islamic subjects, but only

three books have survived: (1) *T'ien-fang Hsing-li* ("The philosophy of Islam"); (2) *T'ien-fang Tien-li* ("Islamic law and traditions"); (3) *T'ien-fang Chih-sheng Shih-lu* ("Biography of the Islamic Prophet"). The first book was compiled from various Arabic and Persian sources, mainly Ṣūfī and Shī'ī works, and was popular amongst the Han élites, since Liu's theories coincided with the cosmology of neo-Confucianism. The second book is more a comprehensive manual for Chinese Muslim life. The third one may be a translation from *Tardjama-i Mawlūd-i Muṣṭafā* (probably a translation of Sa'īd al-Dīn Muḥammad b. Mas'ūd b. Muḥammad al-Kāzarūnī's Arabic work).

Unlike the other three, Yūsuf Ma Fu-ch'u (or Ma Te-hsing) was an *imām-ʿālim*, and the founder of the Yunnan school of Islamic education (the other two are those of Shantung and Shen-hsi). He studied Islam first in Shen-hsi, then went to Mecca on pilgrimage and for learning the "true Islamic sciences". Unlike the other three, who absorbed Confucian education in childhood and then turned to Islam, Ma Fu-ch'u studied Confucianism at the age of 40. As a syncretist, Ma Fu-ch'u tried to harmonise Islamic and Confucian ethics in his teachings, because he thought this was the only way of survival in the *Dār al-Ḥarb*. Nevertheless, he insisted that Muslims should observe strictly Islamic duties while adopting Confucian traditions. He is regarded the most prolific scholar in the late 19th century, and about 40 of his works have survived. He was probably the first ever to try to translate the Qur'ān into Chinese, but this was abandoned when he was executed by the Manchu-Ch'ing government during the Panthay [q.v.] rebellion. The *Sū-tien Yaohui* ("The abridgement of four Islamic classics") is probably his masterpiece, and provides the best evidence of his religious and scholarly accomplishments, presenting his syncretism and Islamic apologia. Ma Fu-chu's achievement in Chinese Islam was outstanding; before him, the qualifications of *ʿālim* and *imām* had never been combined in one person. One might suggest that he tried to turn the ʿulamāʾ into a more cohesive body.

The works of these four scholars have become Chinese Islamic classics from which later generations have drawn their thought. Because of Ma Fu-ch'u's initiation, the institution of ʿulamāʾ thus came partially into being. When global travelling grew in the 20th century, more frequent contacts with Muslims in other Islamic lands made Chinese Muslims place more emphasis on ʿulamāʾ but trends of secularisation and westernization in modern China have meant that traditional *madrasa* education has been replaced by a modern Western one, so that the enthusiasm was never fully given shape. In any case, the modern Chinese state is unlikely to allow Muslims to set up their own religio-political or religio-educational systems, as being potential centres of political challenge.

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7. In West Africa.

In West Africa, although ancient centres such as Dia in Masina, Takidda [q.v.], and Tādmakkat in the Adrar-n-Ifoghas had older traditions of Islamic learning, it is only in 9th/15th century Timbuktu [q.v.] that a recognisable body of 'ulamā' first emerges, dominated by two prominent Ṣanhādja families: the descendants of Muḥammad Akīt, and those of Anda Agh-Muḥammad. Between them they filled the offices of *ḳāḍī* of the city and *imām* of the Sankore mosque for close to two centuries. During this period, Timbuktu emerged as the major Islamic teaching centre of West Africa, leading some to speak of a Sankore university. However, although much of the teaching took place in the Sankore quarter, there is no indication of an organisational

structure, officially-appointed teachers or student hostels. The institution of *wakf* or *hubus* ¶ which allowed the establishment of public teaching institutions in other areas of the Islamic world seems to have been unused in West Africa. Scholars held classes in their houses or in the mosque, references to *madrasa* s (*Ta'riḫ al-Sūdān* , 34, 78-9) apparently referring to private classes rather than to public institutions.

The formational curriculum of the aspiring 'ālim in Timbuktu, and to a large extent elsewhere in West Africa, was grounded in the study of Mālikī *fiḫ* : the *Muwaṭṭa'* of Mālik, the *Mudawwana* of Saḥnūn, the *Risāla* of Ibn Abī Zayd al-Ḳayrawānī, the *Mukhtaṣar far'ī* of Ibn al-Ḥād̲j̲ib with the *Tawḍīḥ* , a commentary by Ḳhalīl b. Ishāḳ, whose *Mukhtaṣar* was the principal work of reference in the field in much of the *bilād al-Sūdān* down to the 20th century. These were supplemented by *Tuḥfat al-ḥukkām* of Ibn 'Āṣim on judicial procedure, the *Madḫhal* of Ibn al-Ḥād̲j̲dj on normative conduct, and *al-Mi'yār al-mughrib* , the great collection of Mālikī *fatāwā* by al-Wansharīsī; *uṣūl al-fīḫ* was studied from the Shāfi'ī text *Djāmi'* *al-ummahāt* of Tād̲j̲ al-Dīn al-Subkī. *Tawḥīd* was studied from the various '*akā'id* of Muḥammad b. Yūsuf al-Sanūsī and the *manẓūma* of Aḥmad al-Djazā'irī; *ḥadīth* comprised the collections of al-Bukḥārī and Muslim and the *Alfiyya* of al-'Irāḳī on the technicalities of transmission. The chief work of Arabic grammar was the *Alfiyya* of Ibn Mālik; of prosody, the *Khazrad̲j̲iyya* of 'Abd Allāh al-Ḳhazrad̲j̲ī; of Ṣūfism, the *Ḥikam* of Ibn 'Aṭā' Allāh al-Iskandarī; of prophetic piety, the *Shifā'* of Ḳādī 'Iyād; of logic, the *Djūmal* of al-Ḳhūnad̲j̲ī; and of astronomy as related to the calendar, the *naẓm* of Abū Muḳrī'. Many of these works could also be found in the curriculum of Fulbe teachers two centuries later, such as that pursued by 'Abd Allāh b. Muḥammad Fodiye (1178-1245/1764-1829) in north-western Hausaland, though the list of works which he studied in Arabic grammar is considerably larger (see M. Hiskett, *Material relating to the state of learning among the Fulani before their jihād* , in *BSOAS*, xix [1957], 550-78). In southern Mauritania, a contemporary of his, Ṣāliḥ b. Muḥammad al-Fullānī of Futa D̲j̲allon (1166-1218/1753-1803), pursued a curriculum of *fiḫ* which included the above works and many more, as well as a wide range of works of *tafsīr* (al-Bayḍāwī, al-Zamakhsharī, al-Rāzī, al-Ḳurṭubī, al-Baghawī, Ibn D̲j̲uzayy, Ibn 'Aṭiyya), a very extensive curriculum of *ḥadīth* including numerous commentaries, and a curriculum in Arabic language which included such fundamental texts as the book of Sībawayhi, the *K. al-'Ayn* of Ḳhalīl b. Aḥmad, and the *Ḳāmūs* of al-Fīrūzābādī; and in literary studies, the *Kāmil* of al-Mubarrad and the *Āmālī* of al-Ḳālī (Ṣāliḥ al-Fullānī, *Ḳatf al-thamar* , Ḥaydarābād 1328/1910).

Such an extensive training was probably uncommon, but until further research is done, we cannot be sure just how uncommon. Ṣāliḥ al-Fullānī was unusual in that he left West Africa at the age of twenty and took up residence in Medina, where he became a prominent teacher in the *ḥadīth* movement which denounced the authority of the *madhāhib* , decrying *taḳlīd* and calling for following (*ittibā'*) of the Prophet's practice through individual scrutiny of the *ḥadīth* literature to determine the legitimacy of actions (see his *Īḳāẓ , ulī 'l-himam wa 'l-abṣār li 'l-iḳtidā'*

bi-sayyid al-muhād̲jirīn wa 'l-anṣār, Beirut 1398/1978). His writings were taken to India, where protagonists of the Ahl-i Ḥadīth movement proclaimed him the co- *mudjaddid* of the 12th century of the *hidjra* along with Murtaḍā al-Zabīdī (see Muḥammad Ashraf al-Ṣiddīqī al-‘Azīmābādī, *Awn al-ma‘būd ‘alā sunan Abī Dāwūd*, Dihlī 1323/1909, iv, 181). He was not the only West African ‘*ālim* to settle and teach in the Middle East: Muḥammad b. Muḥammad al-Kashnāwī (d. 1154/1741-2) taught in Mecca and died in the Djabartī household in Cairo; in the 20th century the Tidjānī scholar Alfa Hāshim (d. 1349/1931) made *hidjra* from French occupation to settle and teach in Mecca. Many others, over the centuries, studied with scholars in the Ḥidjāz or Egypt whilst making the pilgrimage to Mecca; Djalāl al-Dīn al-Suyūṭī received many in the 9th/15th century, and maintained written contact with others (see E.M. Sartain, *Jalāl al-Dīn al-Suyūṭī's relations with the people of Takrūr*, in *JSS*, xv [1971], 193-8); Murtaḍā al-Zabīdī likewise maintained West African links.

West African ‘*ulamā*’ especially before the 20th century, were much concerned with distinguishing believers from unbelievers [see TAKFĪR. In West Africa] and preventing backsliding. A constant theme of their writings is that of *tad̲jīd*, regeneration of the faith. The notion first appears in the replies which the North African scholar Muḥammad b. ‘Abd al-Karīm al-Maghīlī (d. 909/1503-4 or 910/1504-5 [q.v.]) wrote for Askīya al-ḥād̲jīdj Muḥammad of Songhay. Dyula ‘*ulamā*’ of the Suwarian tradition (deriving from the 9th/15th century teacher al-ḥād̲jīdj Sālīm Suwari) made *tad̲jīd* an ongoing obligation for their communities. The reformist scholar ‘Uthmān b. Muḥammad Fodiye (d. 1232/1817 [q.v.]) styled himself a *mudjaddid*, and wrote extensively on distinctions between believers and unbelievers, and the eradication of beliefs and actions contrary to the Sunna (see, for example, his *Iḥyā’ al-sunna wa-ikhmād al-bida’*, Cairo n.d. [ca. 1962]). Al-Suyūṭī’s *ur̲djūza* on the *mudjaddidūn* was known in West Africa, and scholars of the Kunta clan [q.v.] extended it to include West African scholars for the 10th and 11th centuries of the *hidjra*. An anonymous *ur̲djūza* of the 13th/19th century entitled *Tuḥfat al-mustarshid fī dhikr mā li ‘l-dīn min mudjaddid* (B.N., Paris, ms. arabe 5615, fols. 100a-103b), and probably written in southern Mauritania, includes a number of West African names beginning with Aḥmad Bābā (d. 1036/1627 [q.v.]) for the 10th century of the *hidjra* and ending with al-Mukhtār al-Kuntī (d. 1226/1811).

Relations between the ‘*ulamā*’ and, the holders of political power were until the 18th century generally circumspect and at times cordial. In Songhay, after the discordant relationship between Sunni ‘Alī (r. 1464-92) and the ‘*ulamā*’, the rulers of the 10th/16th century (the Askīya dynasty) showed marks of respect, sometimes visiting the ‘*ulamā*’ of Timbuktu and making gifts to a wide range of holy men. In Bornū under the Sayfawa rulers, the office of Chief Imām (*al-imām al-kabīr*) was evidently a state office from the 10th/16th century. Gifts of land and exemption from taxation and harrassment by the ruler’s agents were sometimes granted in royal charters (*maḥram*), as they were farther east in Dār Fūr and the Fundj state of Sinnār on the Blue Nile. In the 18th century, West African ‘*ulamā*’ became more actively involved in the

political sphere. They were instrumental in establishing Islamic polities in Futa Djallon and Futa Toro at this time, while in the 19th century ‘ulamā’ such as ‘Uthmān b. Muḥammad Fodiye, Aḥmadu Lobbo (d. 1844 [q.v.]) of Masina and al-ḥādīdj ‘Umar b. Sa‘īd (d. 1864), themselves assumed leadership of states whose creation they had fostered through *djihād*, adopting in all three cases the caliphal title *amīr al-mu’minīn*.

In the 20th century, West African ‘ulamā’ adopted various positions vis-à-vis colonial rule, some avoiding direct contact with colonial institutions and personnel, others working closely with them; in either case motivations for such positions were complex, but the stands the ‘ulamā’ took were generally supported, explicitly or implicitly, by reference to *sharī‘a* norms. While older teaching traditions have not yet completely died out, many aspiring scholars in the second half of the present century have gone for study to al-Azhar, or more recently to institutions of higher learning in Saudi Arabia and elsewhere in the Arab world. In the new nation-states, the roles of the ‘ulamā’ have been considerably restricted, especially in the legal sphere, though they can still make their voices heard through national Islamic bodies such as the Supreme Council on Islamic Affairs (Nigeria), the Association Malienne pour l’Unité et le Progrès de l’Islam (Mali), and the Conseil Supérieur des Chefs Religieux (Senegal).

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